

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

March 25, 2002

IN RE:

TELEPHONE NUMBERING POOLING

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DOCKET NO. 00-00851

ORDER AMENDING THE DECEMBER 12, 2000 ORDER IMPLEMENTING
1000 NUMBER BLOCK POOLING IN THE 615 AREA CODE

This matter came before the Tennessee Regulatory Authority ("TRA" or "Authority") at a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on November 20, 2001, upon the request of the Consumer Services Division of the TRA.

Background

On November 16, 1999, the TRA filed with the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") the *Petition of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority for Additional Delegated Authority to Implement Numbering Conservation Measures* ("Petition"). The *Petition* sought, among other things, delegated authority to enforce current and new standards for allocating telephone numbers, to reclaim unused and reserved numbers and to implement mandatory thousand block ("1K") number pooling.¹

On March 15, 2000, the North American Numbering Plan Administrator ("NANPA") informed the Authority that it had declared the 901 area code in jeopardy of depletion of

¹ 1K pooling is an alternative method for the assignment of numbering resources which involves the allocation of blocks of a thousand sequential numbers within the second set of three numbers in a telephone number to different service providers in a particular rate area. 1K number pooling conserves more numbers than the usual practice of assigning telephone numbers in ten thousand number blocks.

available central office codes. On July 17, 2000, NANPA advised the Authority that it had declared the 615 area code in jeopardy.

On July 20, 2000, the FCC granted in part the TRA's *Petition*, delegating to the TRA the authority to implement 1K number pooling.² In so doing, the FCC cautioned the TRA and the other state commissions to which such authority was delegated that to the extent they acted under federal authority, they

must ensure that numbers are made available on an equitable basis; that numbering resources are made available on an efficient and timely basis, that whatever policies the state commissions institute with regard to numbering administration not unduly favor or disfavor any particular telecommunications industry segment or group of telecommunications consumers and that the state commissions not unduly favor one telecommunications technology over another.³

On December 12, 2000, the Authority issued the *Order Implementing 1000 Number-Block Pooling in the 615 and 901 Area Codes* ("*Order Implementing 1K Pooling*"), which addressed the problem of number depletion in the 615 and 901 numbering plan areas, the two Tennessee locations facing the gravest numbers shortage. The *Order* reflected the agency's decision to utilize the 3.0 version of the pooling software to implement 1K number pooling. At the time, the 3.0 version was being tested and was scheduled for release in the first quarter of 2001. Thus, the Authority ordered that 1K pooling be implemented in the 615 area code not later than March 1, 2001 "or upon the availability of version 3.0 pooling software." The Authority also ordered that number pooling commence in the 901 area code not later than thirty (30) days prior to the date that mandatory dialing begins for the new 731 area code in West Tennessee.

Unfortunately, unforeseen delays in the release of the 3.0 software due to technical

² See *In the Matter of Numbering Resource Optimization*, CC Docket No. 99-200, 2000 WL 991629, 15 FCC Rcd. 23,371, ¶¶ 5, 20, 47, 237 (Released July 20, 2000) (*Order*) (hereinafter "*Delegated Authority Order*"); see also *In the Matter of Numbering Resource Optimization*, CC Docket No. 99-200, 2000 WL 339808, 15 FCC Rcd. 7574, ¶¶ 183, 191 (Released March 31, 2000) (*Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making*).

³ *Delegated Authority Order*, ¶ 10.

problems stalled the implementation of 1K number pooling in the 615 and 901 area codes. The release date for the 3.1 version, considered a "patch" for the error-prone 3.0 version, is scheduled for the second quarter of 2002.

On October 17, 2001, the Common Carrier Bureau of the FCC released a Public Notice styled "*The Common Carrier Bureau Seeks Comment on the National Thousands-Block Number Pooling Rollout Schedule.*"⁴ The Common Carrier Bureau sought comment on a proposed schedule for 1K number pooling in approximately twenty-one (21) numbering plan areas. The proposed schedule, which was attached to the *Notice*, included approximately one hundred (100) major cities and proposed dates for implementation, beginning on March 15, 2002 and continuing by quarter until March of 2004.⁵ The *Notice* stated that pooling trials commenced before March, 2002 would be transitioned into the national pooling administration program prior to the national pooling rollout. The *Notice* did not specifically address Tennessee's 615 and 901 pooling schedule because those area codes were already part of the FCC's interim pooling plan.

At a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on November 20, 2001, the Authority deliberated on the issue of whether to amend its December 12, 2000 *Order Implementing 1K Pooling* in light of the October 17, 2001 *Notice* issued by the Common Carrier Bureau. The Chief of the TRA's Consumer Services Division reported that representatives of the telecommunications industry were in agreement that number pooling could be implemented during the first quarter of 2002 in the 615 numbering plan area using 1.4 software. During deliberations, the Authority inquired whether the use of the 1.4 software would have a negative impact on the development of competition and was informed that the software would promote

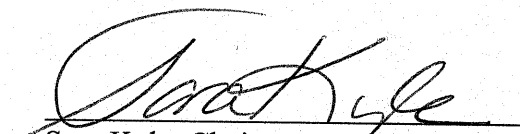
⁴ *Bureau Seeks Comment on the National Thousands-Block Number Pooling Rollout Schedule*, DA 01-2419, 2001 WL 1242365, 16 FCC Rcd. 18,615 (Released: October 17, 2001) (*Public Notice*).

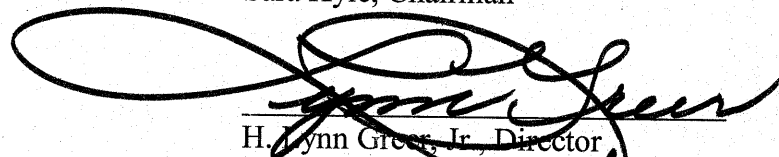
⁵ For states that had not implemented 1K number pooling by March 15, 2002, this decision meant that the federal schedule would preempt any planned, but not yet implemented, state schedule.

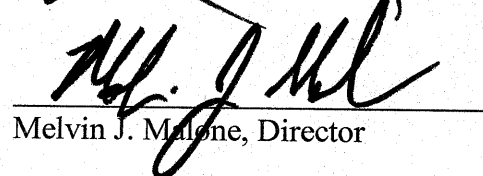
competition because more numbers would be available for release by all carriers. The Authority found that 1K block pooling improved the efficiency of numbering resources and that adopting 1K block pooling in the 615 area code will expand the life of the 615 area code. This, in turn, will positively impact business and residential consumers who will not be required to dial additional numbers or change their telephone numbers. There were no remarks from members of the public or the industry. The Directors then voted unanimously to amend the December 12, 2000 *Order Implementing 1K Pooling* to require the industry to implement interim 1K pooling in the 615 area code within the first quarter of 2002, but no later than March 14, 2002, utilizing version 1.4 software or another version of number pooling software should such become available within the same time frame.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:


The Authority's December 12, 2000 order on telephone numbering pooling is amended to require the industry to implement interim thousand block pooling in the 615 numbering plan area within the first quarter of 2002 and no later than March 14, 2002, utilizing version 1.4 or another version of pooling software should such become available within the same time frame.


Sara Kyle, Chairman


H. Lynn Green, Jr., Director


Melvin J. Malone, Director

ATTEST:


K. David Waddell, Executive Secretary